Computer Tips & Tricks

Tip #1 - To increase (or decrease) the default font size on your Web browser (so the Web pages you are viewing are easier to read), on the Web browser menu, go to **View > Text Size** and select the size you want. The font size will stay this way until you change it.

You can also enlarge the text on any Web page by pressing **Ctrl** and the plus or minus keys (for bigger or smaller fonts).

Tip #2 - You can tap the **Space** bar on the keyboard to scroll down on a Web page one screenful at a time. Add the **Shift** key (Shift + Space bar) to scroll back up. You can also use the arrow keys or the page up/page down keys on the keyboard to move up and down.

Tip #3 - You can switch or toggle from one open program to the next by pressing **Alt** key plus the **Tab** key (Alt+Tab). Also look down at the taskbar at the bottom of the computer screen and any program that you have open will be showing.

Tip #4 - You don't have to type "http://www" into your Web browser. Just type the remainder: "nytimes.com" or "dilbert.com," for example.

Tip #5 - Copying and pasting text – If you want to copy some text from a Web site or document and paste it into another document, click on the first word of the text you want and, holding down your left mouse button, drag the cursor over the text you want to copy. Then hit the Control key (Ctrl) and the letter **C** on your keyboard. To paste this onto another document (Word, e-mail, etc.), toggle over to that document and hit the Control key (Ctrl) and the letter **V** on your keyboard. NOTE: If you don't want to paste the text w/formatting, pictures, etc., instead of hitting **CTRL+V**, click on **Edit** on the menu bar of Word and choose **Paste Special** and choose unformatted text.

Tip #6 - The most commonly used feature in Internet browsers is the back button. However, all browsers also have a small black down arrow to the right of the back button. This button allows you to easily see the history of the last 5-10 pages you've visited and quickly get back to them. This feature is especially helpful for those pesky pages that forward you back to a page each time you press the back button or for when you wish to move back several pages but don't want to have to press the back button several times.

Tip #7 - Delete browsing history - You will be amazed at how many files you collect when you browse the internet, including temporary internet files, cookies, history, form data, and passwords. To keep your computer running smoothly you must regularly delete all of this junk. If you are a person that likes the computer filling in your passwords you should probably leave the cookies and the passwords. To get there open Internet Explorer. On the menu bar, go to **Tools** and choose **Delete Browsing History**. This will take you to a menu like the screenshot below:
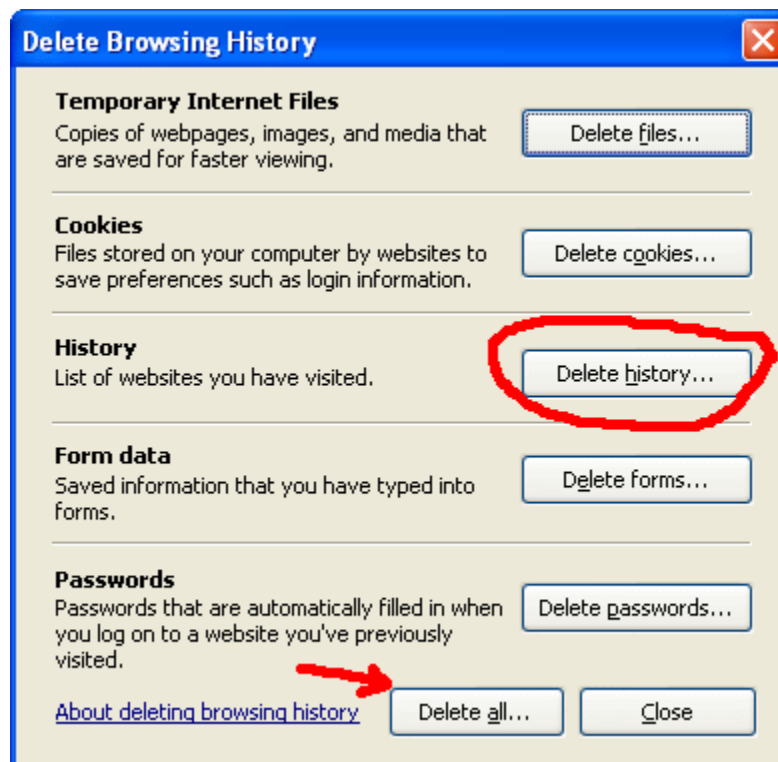
You can choose to **Delete all** at the bottom or you can delete them individually.

Tip #8 - If you'd like to set your browser so that you do not keep your Internet history (default is 20 days), i.e., a list of Web sites you've visited, you can do that by going to **Tools > Internet Options** (on the library's public computers, this will be blocked, so you need to go to **View** and choose **Web Page Privacy Policy** and then the **Settings** button). On the **General** tab, next to the heading, *Browsing history*, click on the **Delete** button. Instead of hitting **Delete** under *Browsing history*, click on the **Settings** button. Under the **History** section, you'll see the number of days to keep pages in the history. At the library, we keep this at zero, but at home, it's probably something different, like 20 days. You can change it to zero.

Tip #9 – The **General** tab is also the place to go see what your *home page* is set at (if you don't feel like clicking on the house icon on your browser) and where you can set your *search* default (again, if you don't want to do that from the browser, where it shows in the upper-right corner).

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Tip #10 - If you want to set your browser up so that the temporary files are ALWAYS deleted after you close the browser window, click on the **Advanced** tab. Scroll down until you get to the *Security* section. Check the box for 'Empty Temporary Internet Files folder when browser is closed.' Make sure to **Apply** and hit **OK**.

Tip #11 - File extensions – Say someone sends you a file attached to an e-mail. The file will have a name and an extension. File extensions basically let you know what type of information is contained in a particular file. For example a Microsoft Word file has the .doc or docx extension. The .jpeg or sometimes the .jpg is a file extension for a certain type of graphic (photo).

Here are some other examples of file extensions:

- .exe (An executable file, usually the file that starts a program.)
- .pdf (Portable Document Format, is a file format created by Adobe Systems. Most office documents come in .pdf file format.)
- .Doc/.docx – Microsoft Word document (if an 'x' is included, it's version 2007)
- .xls/.xlxx – Microsoft Excel workbook/worksheet (if an 'x' is included, it's version 2007)
- .ppt/.pptx – Microsoft Power Point presentation (if an 'x' is included, it's version 2007)
- .zip/.rar (These could be any file but they have been compressed and packed away to a smaller size. When unpacked or unzipped it will become what it was originally.)
- .wav/ .mp3 (music files)
- .jpg/.gif/.bmp (Picture file formats)

Tip #12 - Send a friend the web page you are viewing (or a link to the Web page) using the default mail program on your computer by clicking **File > Send** (or click the **Pages** button on the browser menu bar) and either "Page by E-mail" or "Link by E-mail." Otherwise, just copy the URL in the browser address section and paste it in an e-mail.

Tip #13 - To stop those annoying pop-up ads, on your Web browser, go to **Tools > Pop-up Blocker** and turn on/off or enable just for this site. NOTE: For some Web sites to function properly, specifically the library's online catalog (http://innopac.fauquiercounty.gov), you must allow pop-ups.

Tip #14 - Bookmarks - Quickly bookmark any web page in all major browsers by pressing **CTRL + D** on your keyboard. Pressing these two keys together will open the bookmarks or favorites for your browser and allow you to quickly place a bookmark for the page you're currently at. Otherwise, on your browser, click the **Add to Favorites** button, which is the star with the green plus sign to the left of it. Or, go to **Favorites > Add to Favorites** (you can organize your favorites into categories). If you haven't organized your favorites into folders (topics) and want to have an easier way to view the list, alphabetically, click your right mouse button and select **Sort by Name**.

Tip #15 - RSS Feeds - RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a format for delivering regularly changing web content. It is technology you can use to have information sent to you, rather than having to go look for it. Many news-related sites, weblogs and other online publishers syndicate their content as an RSS Feed to whoever wants it. RSS solves a problem for people who regularly use the web. It allows you to easily

stay informed by retrieving the latest content from the sites you are interested in. You save time by not needing to visit each site individually. You ensure your privacy, by not needing to join each site's email newsletter.

You can tell whether a Web site provides RSS by noting the RSS button on Internet Explorer. If it's grayed out, that means no RSS. If it turns orange, you can click on it and just get the RSS (no ads, etc.). To subscribe to the feed itself, click the **Subscribe to Feed** link. When you want to come back to the feed(s) later, simply click on the star button on your browser (**Favorites Center**) and click the **Feeds** link. You'll see a list of any Feeds you've subscribed to. NOTE: There are several Web sites on the Internet that maintain large listings of available RSS Feeds. These sites include *Syndic8.com, CompleteRSS*, and *Search 4 RSS*.

Tip #16 - Suppose you're looking at a Web page and there is a link on the page you want to click on. However, you don't want to lose the page you're on. You can open that link in a new browser window by holding down the **Shift** key on your keyboard and clicking on the link.

Tip #17 - Printing sections of a page - Save on your printer ink by selectively printing in Windows programs such as Microsoft Word, Internet Explorer, WordPad, Outlook, etc. To do this, highlight portions of text you wish to print and click **print**. In the printer dialog window under Page Range choose the option **Selection.**

Tip #18 - Print preview – If you're not sure how many pages a document will be, instead of clicking on **Print**, choose **File > Print Preview**. You'll see the number of pages and can then decide to print just a section or page range.

Tip #19 - If you're trying to find a particular name or word on a Web site or a document, hold down **Ctrl + F** to get the Find dialog box:
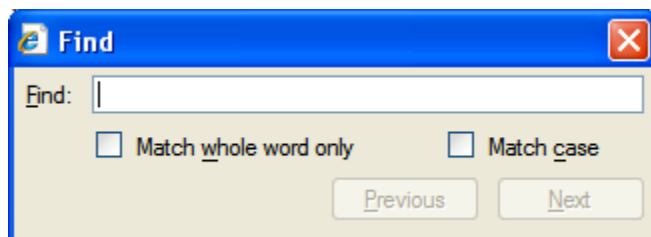
Type in the name or word and then hit the **Next** button to find the first/next instance of it.

Tip #20 - Internet Security – If you do any sort of online shopping or go to a site that requires you to enter personal information (name, address, etc.), check to see if the site you're on encrypts the data.

To verify this look for a small lock ( ) in the bottom right corner of portion of your browser window or next to the address bar (as shown below) depending on your browser and its version. If visible this lock should also be in the locked position and not unlocked.

Internet Explorer 7 secure address bar

We also suggest that you look at the URL and make sure it begins with **https** as shown above.

When in the lock position all data you send will be encrypted, which helps anyone from understanding the data if it's intercepted while being sent. When no lock is visible or the lock is in the unlocked position all information is being sent as plaintext and if intercepted it could be easily read. NEVER send confidential information via e-mail, because e-mail is not encrypted.